

Office of the

Board of Health

City Hall

166 Boulder Drive – Suite 108

Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

978-829-1870

A Virtual Meeting was held on April 15, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

Present: Stephen Curry, Director; John Bogdasarian, M.D., Chairman; Ian Murray; Sandra Knipe; Sam Squailia, City Counselor.

Dr. Bogdasarian opened the meeting at 5:00 pm.

COVID-19 Update/Discussion:

Mr. Curry stated since March 1, 2020 there has been a total of 4,501 total Covid-19 cases, 3 confirmed cases in the last 24 hours, 61 cases in the last week, 129 confirmed cases in the last 2 weeks. The positivity rate is about 3.28% which is a bit higher than it has been but still nothing like the spike the state is seeing. The state had 2004 cases in the last 24 hours.

There has been 5500 vaccine doses administered in our communities since January 11, 2021. We currently have 99 active cases ordered to isolate and since March 1, 2020 we have had 4259 people recover & 143 deaths in Fitchburg.

Mr. Curry stated today there was a 2nd dose clinic for 300 folks at the Senior Center. We are hoping to receive 400 Moderna doses with a tentative clinic scheduled for April 21, 2021 at MOC, 68 Airport Road from 12-8:00pm.

We have 1200 J&J doses we are holding as well as 360 Pfizer doses which we plan to schedule a clinic next week. We have a refrigerator & freezer in the BOH office for the storage of the vaccine. The freezer goes to 25 below zero so as long as we use the Pfizer vaccine within 30 days we are good to go. The state pushes for us to get rid of that vaccine within 10 days.

Mr. Curry stated the Equity doses which is a DPH Initiative for the 20 communities hardest hit by Covid. These doses are designed for people of color, English not their first language, homeless and indigenous people. More than 80% of the cases are people of color. Every Thursday DPH comes out with a vaccination report for the city and the ethnic communities that have a low vaccination rate.

We have signed a contract and will have access to the old KMART building for a clinic but the building needs updates such as emergency systems in the building, fire extinguishers, fire sprinklers, emergency lighting, internet access etc. We are awaiting approval from DPH to make this a regional vaccine site. The KMART site will contain a testing site in the old garden center

that has a separate entrance and will operate 3-4 days a week 7-8 hours a day. The vaccine flow hasn't been a ready supply to support the region which has been a problem.

On Monday the general public will be able to be vaccinated so the KMART building with a 350 parking spot parking lot is a huge site so this is a good location for a regional vaccine site. We would need to do 750 doses a day 5 days a week for a regional site classification.

There is also a DPH vaccination mobile unit and we will be collaborating with churches and other entities to hold clinics in neighborhoods to help people feel comfortable with getting the vaccine.

The DPH liaison and programs are the 20 hardest hit communities, the DPH liaison is Jenna David, has been very helpful in getting us from 100 doses a week up to 400 doses.

The Best Value Grant is another DPH initiative which is \$152,000 funded up until June 30, 2022. This will allow us to hire a vaccine outreach coordinator to set up clinics, register people and work with agencies for the outreach to continue to get the hard to reach folks to give them the option to get vaccinated. The job description was submitted to HR last week and hopefully have a nurse do the job soon.

DEP Sustainable Materials Grant FY21:

Mr. Curry stated we have received \$42,000 dollars. This grant is an annual grant which we have received the last 4-5 years. This grant is associated with the solid waste and recycling programs in the city. This includes the Recollect App which allows anyone with a smart phone to look up items to be recycled, when recycle will be picked up. This app also has the ability to help with enforcement as well as cleaning up contamination that is in recycling.

Dr. Bogdasarian made a motion to utilize the DEP Sustainable Materials Grant for FY21. Motion was 2nd by Sandra Knipe. All were in favor, motion carries.

Review and Approve Meeting Minutes:

Ms. Knipe suggested to table the minutes until the next meeting.

Virtual Meeting was abruptly shut off due to technical difficulties with GOTO Meeting application.